JOHN ENGLISHMAN,

In Defence of the Engliſh Conſtitution.

Saturday, July 5, 1755. Number X.

To W--- --- *Eſq*; *Author of the* Watch-T---

SIR,

AS I ever eſteemed it a Mark of a ſelfiſh Spirit, to conceal any Thing that may be of public or private Utility, I ſhall make no Apology for this Letter; being perſuaded, you will not only pardon my Officiouſneſs, but thank me for my Advice; as you muſt be convinced I have taken this Trouble purely with a Deſign to ſerve you. Should I be diſappointed in the End, I ſhall be very ſorry, but ſhall have no Reaſon to accuſe myſelf of any ſiniſter View or baſe Purpoſe.

I perceive, by various Symptoms, that you are troubled with a Diſeaſe, commonly called the *Scribendi Cocoethes*, or *Itch* of *Scribling*.

What is vulgarly termed the *Itch* and the *Cocoethes*, however different they may appear, are originally the ſame Diſeaſe, both proceeding from Animalcula in the Blood and Humours of the Body. In the Itch, the Animalcula being determined to the Skin by the Force of Circulation, produce numerous Eruptions, accompanied with ſo ſevere an Itching, that the Patient can not refrain currying his Hide with his own Nails.----- In the *Cocoethes*, the Œſtra, (Naturaliſts have long diſputed about the Form of theſe Animalcula, which I have aſſigned as the Cauſe of the Diſeaſe; ſome reſembling them to a Turtle, others to a Lobſter, a Flea, a Hog, a Louſe, *&c. &c.* But by the moſt accurate Microſcoppic Obſervations, I have plainly diſcovered, that they are exactly like the Œſtrum, or Gad-Bee, called alſo the Breeze, which you will often ſee, vexing and buzing a Hound in the Summer Seaſon) I ſay, the Œſtra circulating with the Blood, find great Difficulty in paſſing the capillary Veſſels of the Brain; they are therefore obliged to make vigorous Efforts in order to get forward. This excites a Senſation analogous to that in the Itch, and produces the true *Cocoethes*; which can no otherways be allayed, than by putting Pen to Paper. By this Means the Œſtra are voided in amazing Quatities, and an End put to the Paroxyſm.--- But as they are ſeldom all evacuated, thoſe that remain ſoon produce another Brood, and then a new Fit of the *Cocoethes*, or the *Itch* comes on.

The Paroxyſms in the *Cocoethes*, obſerve different Periods in different Subjects; tho' in the ſame Subject they are generally regular, recurring every Day, Week, *&c.*--- Sometimes, indeed, they are very uncertain, even in the ſame Subject, and ſeize the Patient at irregular Intervals. They are then called *occaſional* Paroxyſms, and are very apt to reverberate; deſcending *in Poſteriora*, they produce a Diſeaſe of quite a different Nature, by Phyſicians called the *Hæmorrhoids*, by the common People, the *Piles*.

When the Diſeaſe ſeizes a Perſon whoſe Fibers are *lean*, *dry*, and *rigid*, and who abounds with *aduſt Choler*, or *atra Bilis*; it is apt to make him paſſionate in his Writings, and to deal much in peeviſh, ſplenetic Expreſſions, and ſarcaſtic Epithets. It is alſo remarkable, that if the Patient has (tho' ever ſo long) been dabling in Poetry, eſpecially of the romantic Kind, or if he has ever *libelled* a young Lady; the Moment the Diſeaſe ſeizes him, he is diveſted of all Regard to Truth and Probability, Decency and Good-Manners.

Now, *Sir*, as theſe Symptoms,---except the Accuſation of *Poetry* and *Libelling*,---evidently concur in you; and as I am ſorry to ſee a tolerable Genius ſo badly employed, I ſhall, out of the great Benignity of my own Diſpoſition, preſcribe you a Method of Cure; from which, I am confident, you will reap great Advantage.

I hope you are convinced of my Knowledge and Abilities, from the accurate Account I have given you of the Diſeaſe; but to give you the better Opinion of me, I ſhall endeavour to convince you, that I really have formed a right Judgment of your Conſtitution and Diſeaſe.

I have ſuppoſed you to be a lean Perſon, of a dry Habit, and rigid Fibres, and that you abound with *atra Bilis*. I am led to this Concluſion, by the Ill-natured paſſionate Expreſſions you make uſe of; and from the opprobrious Terms with which you give to all your Opponents. Branding the Promoters of, and Friends to the College, as by Charter eſtabliſhed, with the Appellation of *aſpiring Zealots*; charging them with attempting *to appropriate the Monies raiſed by the Legiſlature, for a Provincial College, to a deſpicable Nurſery for the Propagation of Prieſtcraft and Trumpery*. And had not you turned your Whiſtle, and rung the Alarm, from the Top of your Babylonian Tower, *they would*, you *ſuppoſe*, *before long*, *have challenged all the public Taxes levied to defend the Province, for the Building of Chappels, and enriching the greater Number of* epiſcopal Eccleſiaſtics. They not only would apply *the Money raiſed to eſtabliſh a public Seminary of Learning, to the Erection of a little, narrow, pitiful, partial, prieſtly, paltry, factious, ſeparate Academy of their own*; but were ready to burſt with Malice, becauſe you would not *chearfully paſs under the Yoke, and bow the Knee, to the Image of Bell and the Dragon, which they were about erecting*.--- Fine Words! I wonder where you ſtole them. Surely ſuch gentle Expreſſions, ſuch Flowers of Rhetoric, ſuch a *Copia Verborum* could never

never have flown from your Pen, had you not improved a polite Education, with much Reading and extenſive Travelling. Had you adorned it with a Daſh of B--tch and Wh--re, I could have ſworn, you had ſeen *Billingſgate*.---O! How would an old Fiſh-Wife, or Oyſter-Wench, glory in having you her Pupil! How would her fond Heart dilate to hear you exert your Talents in Imitation of her! How would her Bowels yearn over you, when ſhe found you made ſuch amazing Progreſs, as in Six Months Time, to be able to read an inſtructive Lecture, to even Adepts in the ſublime Art of Scolding! How would ſhe clap you on the Shoulder, with a *well done little Blood! that's a good One my Buck, &c.*--- As a further Proof of your Ill-Nature, Ill-Manners, Spleen, Malice; and, in ſhort every perverſe Diſpoſition, I appeal to every Paper wrote by you.

You tell us, Numb. XII. that, *when you began the* Watch-Tower, *you expected to be ſhot at by the Pop-Gun Artillery of the Advocates for a Party-College*. This puts me in Mind of mad *Jack*, in the *Tale of a Tub*. * *Jack* ſtood in the Street begging a Slap on the Face, a broken Head, a Kick on the A--- of every one that paſſed, and when by this Means he got ſoundly drubbed, ſtroled about, endeavouring to move the Compaſſion of People, by pretending he got his Bangs and Bruiſes, in repelling the *Grand Turk*, the *French King*, the *Pope*, the *Great Mogul*, and the Lord knows who. You, by villifying your Betters, and abuſing them with the moſt ſcurrilous Language, endeavour to draw the Reſentment of ſome of them upon you, that you may have an Opportunity of Haranguing againſt Bigots, Zealots, Perſecution, *&c.* And as often as you are contradicted, or your Sentiments diſputed, out comes a doleful Tale of, God knows how much Obloquy, Reproach, and Calumny, you have received from thoſe *Dunces*, *Fools*, *Old Women*, the Prieſts; who it ſeems are ſuch arrant Fools, that they cannot ſpeak without contradicting themſelves. Such *Dunces*, that they cannot lay a Scheme which has not a Thouſand Inconſiſtencies in it, which every School-Boy may diſcern: Such tattling Old Women, that nobody believes what they ſay; and yet, theſe *Dunces*, theſe *Fools*, theſe *Old Women*, had like to have *duped*, *fooled*, and chouſed a whole Province. Nay, had you not aroſe,--- you in whom all the Learning, Penetration, and Diſcernment, not only of the Moderns, but alſo Ancients is united, they certainly would have mounted upon the Backs of the Laity, and ride them *Poſt* to the Devil: In Twenty Years Time: Fires would have been kindled thro' the whole Province, and (ſtrange to tell!) every Engliſh Preſbyterian and Independent in it would have ſuffered Martyrdom for his Religion. It has ever been the Cuſtom of Fanatics, to affect running into Perſecution, to ſhew how cleverly they can bear it; and then to make vaſt Merit of every little Hardſhip they ſuffer. I doubt not, you yourſelf would have been the Protomartyr for their new-fangled Diſcipline; which, notwithſtanding the many cruel diabolical Perſecutions you vainglorioufly boaſt of, has never yet been ſealed with the Blood of a ſingle Confeſſor, except now and then one hanged for Rebellion.

Certainly we have great Reaſon to be thankful, that a *Yahoo* of ſuch diſtinguiſhed Abilities, has roſe up among us, who will no longer be *Prieſt-ridden*, Dunce-ridden, Hag-ridden; but is determined to aſſert his native Freedom, and to wallow in the Mire of his own Nonſenſe at Diſcretion.

I will now fulfil my Promiſe, and preſcribe you a Method of Cure; which, conſidering the Inveteracy of your Diſeaſe, I fear will be only palliative: I hope however, to relieve you of your Spleen and Ill-Nature, and convert your Pen from fomenting Diſcord and Contention, to the Promotion of Unity and Concord.

1*ſt*, Refrain from high ſeaſoned Foods, from Wine, and all Spirituous Liquors, becauſe they are apt to inflame the Blood and Paſſions; and when the Wine is in, the Wit is out. This would infallibly cauſe a violent Fit of the *Cocoethes*, which might coſt you a Ream of Paper, beſides ſcratching the Head and biting the Nails to allay it.

2*d*, Confine yourſelf to a thin cooling Diet: Broth of Veal or Lamb, which by Sympathy may perhaps contribute to allay your Spleen and Ill-Nature, would be adviſeable.---I would not here recommend Butter-Milk, or any Acids, for fear of making you ſour and moroſe.

3*d*, Twice a Week let Blood. I would adviſe it to be done by applying Leeches, *ad Venas Hæmorrhoidales*. The Conſent between this Part and the Head, is no leſs manifeſt, than hard to be accounted for.

The accurate Dean *Swift*, in his juſtly celebrated *Tale of a Tub*, aforecited, page 3. gives an Inſtance very much to my Purpoſe; and another in pag. 113. of a mighty King, who, while the Œſtrum affected the Brain, diverted himſelf with winning and loſing Towns and Battles, frighting Kings from their Dominions, and Children from their Bread and Butter, plundering and deſtroying every one that fell into his Clutches, of whatever Rank or Condition; 'till at length the Œſtra ſubſiding to the inferior Parts, produced a Fiſtula, and left his Head intirely at reſt.

As I am now collecting Materials, in order to oblige the World with a Collection of rare Caſes of this Kind, I ſhould take it as a ſingular Favour, if you would, upon the Receipt of this Letter, immediately write the State of your own Caſe, and then keep an exact Journal of every Alteration till the Cure is compleated; which (if you will pleaſe to favour me with your Name and Titles of Diſtinction) I will do myſelf the Honour to dedicate to you. But---as you have ſometimes done,---I had almoſt forgot from whence I digreſſed. I will therefore return to the Method of Cure.

4*th*, Twice a Week upon ſuch Days as you do not let Blood, take a Purgative of the cooling Kind: *Sal Mirab. Glaub.* or *Sal Cathart*, *Amar*, or a little *Sena*, with *Cream of Tartar*, *Manna*, I believe will do very well: But inſtead of drinking Water-Gruel during the Operation, I would adviſe you to read one of your own Papers: They mightily quicken the Operation, and intirely prevent all Gripes, as I lately found by Experience; tho' indeed I was at firſt going to employ the Paper to another Uſe, till I diſcovered their particular Virtue, with which perhaps you are intirely unacquainted. I immediately acquainted a neighbouring Practitioner with the Diſcovery, who has ſince informed me, that upon repeated Trials he finds that Half a Doſe will effectually do Buſineſs, provided the Paper be well read, and thoroughly digeſted.

Should you want any further Directions in this Caſe, you may always command, *Sir*, *Yours*, *&c.*

HERMANUS PARACELSUS.

* *Vid.* Swift's *Works*, 10*th Edit.* 12*m. Vol* 12, *p.* 141. *printed at* London, 1751.

P. S. *As ſoon as you have made yourſelf Maſter of the above Directions, be pleaſed to burn this Letter; for ſhould it, by any Accident, fall into the Hands of ſome Job-catching Quack, it may deprive me of the Reputation of my intended Collection, and prevent the Honour I intend to do you in the Dedication.*

H. P.